

31. Interruptions of our plans are divine appointments. Learn to see God as the one in control. Learn to see His hand in every situation.

32. 2. Joseph also met an earthly need

33. He comforted his brothers and spoke kindly to them. When we focus on the Lord, our actions will be Christ-like and Christ honoring.

34. As we walk on our journeys of faith, may we learn to focus on the Lord, just as Joseph did!

**Journey's of Faith
The Journey Egypt
Genesis 37:1-10
February 7, 2010**

Introduction

1. Horatio Nelson was a sickly boy living in eighteenth century England. As the nephew of a sea captain, he hoped one day to follow his uncle's example. Because Nelson's health was weak, his uncle was reluctant to take him on voyages. The death of his mother left him in the care of his uncle. Traveling on ship, he often became ill. His weak health finally forced Horatio to go home for a rest. Undaunted, he started another voyage as soon as possible. He was resolved to make his life worthy. He was promoted quickly to commander of a British ship, the *Agamemnon*. Commander Nelson fought in battle after battle, as he was always true to his mission in life—that his life should be worthy. Some sea battles were won; some were lost. During this time, he suffered much physical pain. He never flinched in the face of trouble. His strong resolve eventually made him a British hero. In a decisive battle, Lord Nelson led England to victory against Napoleon at Trafalgar. He was a man who was totally committed to his country. His determination made him unstoppable. Should Christians not be more committed to serve the one who gave His life to redeem us? What does it take to stop you from being faithful to God?
2. All people will face crisis at different times in their lives, and often, there are unexpected turns. Yet, I believe most people would want to say what the apostle Paul said at the end of his life:

3. **2 TIMOTHY 4:6-7** *For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith:*
4. Joseph was a man who finished his course. He was a man who suffered, yet he remained faithful to God. In many ways he was like the Lord Jesus Christ.
5. Joseph was rejected by his brothers, so was Jesus.
6. Joseph was loved by his father, so was Jesus.
7. Joseph was victorious over temptation, so was Jesus.
8. Joseph was taken into custody because of a false witness, so was Jesus.
9. Joseph suffered from doing what was right, so did Jesus.
10. Joseph was promoted from prison to rule the nation. Jesus was promoted from prison to rule the nations.
11. As we examine Joseph's journey, we admire his strength to remain faithful to God through the trials, temptations, and blessings that came into his life. He was a man who was greatly used by God, a true Bible hero. The secret of Joseph's strength of character was his unconditional faith in God. No matter what happened to him, his faith remained unshakable.
12. Let's notice Joseph's journey for God!

I. **A Journey of Faith**

1. Genesis 35:1-5
2. Faith is trusting in God's plan.
3. *Hebrews 11:6 says, "But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."*
4. **A. Faith to receive God's revelation**
5. *Genesis 37:5 And Joseph dreamed a dream, and he told it his brethren: and they hated him yet the more.*
6. God revealed his plan to Joseph in a dream, which gave him a glimpse of God's plan for his life.

18. The first time his brethren came, he placed their money back in the sacks.
19. *GENESIS 42:25 Then Joseph commanded to fill their sacks with corn, and to restore every man's money into his sack, and to give them provision for the way: and thus did he unto them.*
20. **C. He showed the purpose of God.**
21. *GENESIS 45:7 And God sent me before you to preserve you a posterity in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance.*
22. Just like Joseph and his brothers, your circumstances are directed by God. He has an eternal purpose for each step of your journey.
23. *The Bible says, "The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD: and he delighteth in his way" (Psalm 37:23).*
24. May we allow God to fulfill his purposes by taking each step as He orders it and by trusting Him along the way.
25. *ROMANS 8:28 And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.*
26. **D. He focused on the Lord.**
27. After Jacob died, the brothers thought Joseph would take revenge on them. Instead, Joseph focused on the Lord and His purposes.
28. *GENESIS 50:19-21 And Joseph said unto them, Fear not: for am I in the place of God? But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive. Now therefore fear ye not: I will nourish you, and your little ones. And he comforted them, and spoke kindly unto them.*
29. **1. Joseph saw a heavenly perspective**
30. God meant it for good. Do you see earthly situations from a heavenly perspective?

7. According to Joseph's original dream, his brethren had come to him for help. They had come to Egypt twice for food. The first time, Joseph recognized his brothers at once. They, however, could not recognize a brother who had not been seen for twenty years and had risen to be a great leader.
8. On their first encounter, Joseph acted as a foreigner. He kept Simeon and sent the other brothers on their way with instructions to return with Benjamin. Then, they returned a second time. Notice Joseph's response ...
9. **A. He forgave his brothers.**
10. **GENESIS 45:1-5**
11. Joseph realized that God had used all the incidents in his life to bring him to this place of honor and did not take offense for the wounds his brothers had inflicted.
12. Instead, he realized that it was all a part of God's amazing plan. He forgave his brothers completely!
13. Clara Barton, founder of the American Red Cross, was reminded one day of a vicious deed that someone had done to her years before. But she acted as if she had never even heard of the incident. "Don't you remember it?" her friend asked. "No," came Barton's reply, "I distinctly remember forgetting it." God is eager to forgive us!
14. *1 JOHN 1:9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us*
15. *EPHESIANS 4:32 And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.*
16. Even as Joseph was rejected by his own, Jesus Christ, who came nearly two thousand years later, was rejected by His own, and was crucified on the Cross. He offers salvation and forgiveness to all who believe. As Christ has so mercifully forgiven us, may we learn to forgive others!
17. **B. He showed the grace of God.**

7. God revealed the time when Joseph would be a ruler and others would bow to him and that he would one day rule over his brothers.
8. Joseph's dream was of prophetic value. Dreams in ancient times were much attended to; hence, Joseph's dream, though he was a mere boy, engaged the serious consideration of his family.
9. It takes faith to receive and believe the truths found in the Word of God. But may we, like Joseph, exercise faith to receive God's Word and apply it to our lives.
10. *1 Thessalonians 2:13 For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.*
11. **B. Faith to recite God's revelation**
12. *GENESIS 37:6-8 And he said unto them, Hear, I pray you, this dream which I have dreamed: For, behold, we were binding sheaves in the field, and, lo my sheaf arose, and also stood upright; and, behold, your sheaves stood round about, and made obeisance to my sheaf. And his brethren said to him, Shalt thou indeed reign over us? or shalt thou indeed have dominion over us? And they hated him yet the more for his dreams, and for his words.*
13. Joseph acknowledged his revelation from God and had the faith to share it with his brothers. Resentment built in the hearts of his older brothers as Joseph recited the details of the dream to them.
14. *1 Thessalonians 2:4 says, "But as we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel, even so we speak; not as pleasing men, but God, which trieth our hearts."*
15. Just as Joseph shared the news of his dream with his brothers, we must also be willing to speak to share the Good News of the Gospel with those around us.

16. It may not be easy. They may not happily receive you, but doing so pleases God and demonstrates our faith in Him.
17. His brothers did not like Joseph's dream, but it was not his dream; it was God's dream. Your neighbors may not like the Gospel message. But it's not your message, it's God's! This truth can bring great faith and confidence into the heart of the believer.
18. God had a special purpose for Joseph's life. Though He did not disclose every event along the journey, He promised to be with Joseph each step of the way.
19. *Hebrews 13:5 says, "Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee."*
20. As God was with Joseph, so will He be with us on our journeys of faith. He knows what we need, and He will lovingly direct each step of the journey as we respond in faith.

II. A Journey of Faithfulness

1. *I Corinthians 4:2 Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.*
2. Although no one plans for suffering, it is inevitable.
3. When Joseph's journey brought him through times of despair, he simply remained faithful. When he was sold into slavery by his brothers, he remained steadfast. God took Joseph on a journey that at times seemed to be headed in the opposite direction of his expected end, but he continued to trust God.
4. Though Joseph could have quit many times, he never doubted. He never wavered even when circumstances seemed to destroy his dream. He kept doing what he knew God wanted him to do, and each trial strengthened his faith. Every experience prepared Joseph to fulfill God's purpose for his life.

45.1 CORINTHIANS 4:2 Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.

46. God does not say we have to be rich, strong, or talented to serve Him. The one requirement God places on us is that we be found faithful. When we are, He promises to accomplish His will in our lives.

47. PHILIPPIANS 1:6 Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ:

48. God will carry out His work in your life until it is complete. He will not leave it unfinished. He will give you the grace needed to continue your journey of faith.

III. A Journey of Forgiveness

1. *Forgiveness must be a key ingredient found in the life of every Christian.*
2. Unforgiveness breeds bitterness that can result in a life that is ineffective and useless in the Lord's work. One of the great signs of Joseph's effectiveness was his ability to endure without resentment.
3. *HEBREWS 12:14-15 Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord: Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled;*
4. Satan delights in causing conflict among Christians. If he can get you to hold a grudge against another, that grudge can easily consume your thoughts and can blind your eyes to God's blessings. Hearts consumed with bitterness and unforgiveness keep Christians from going forward on their journey for the faith.
5. *"Depart from evil, and do good; seek peace, and pursue it" (Psalms 34:14).*
6. May we learn from the example of Joseph and follow the pattern of Jesus Christ as we strive to forgive others on our journeys.

33. **II TIMOTHY 2:22** *Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart.*

34. Temptations will come, and they take many different forms. A believer who is faithful to God will strive to remain a clean vessel for His use. Today, as in Joseph's day, a person who wants to serve God must guard against choosing wrong when tempted. Satan will try any method to derail you from God's purpose for your life. Maintain your integrity. Choose to follow God and stay pure.

35. **JAMES 1: 12** *Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.*

36. **2. Joseph was faithful to God.**

37. Someone said, "Joseph lost his coat, but he kept his character." Another person stated, "Character isn't created in a crisis, it only comes to light then."

38. **3. He was imprisoned for his faith.**

39. **GENESIS 39:20** *And Joseph's master took him, and put him into the prison, a place where the king's prisoners were bound: and he was there in the prison.*

40. **4. God's mercy sustained him.**

41. **GENESIS 39:21** *But the LORD was with Joseph, and shewed him mercy, and gave him favour in the sight of the keeper of the prison.*

42. **5. The Lord was with him.**

43. **GENESIS 39:23** *The keeper of the prison looked not to any thing that was under his hand; because the LORD was with him, and that which he did, the LORD made it to prosper.*

44. **PROVERBS 16:7** *When a man's ways please the LORD, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him.*

5. **A. When he was betrayed by his brethren**

6. Joseph's brothers envied him, yet he remained faithful

7. **GENESIS 37:11** *And his brethren envied him; but his father observed the saying.*

8. Joseph's brothers persecuted him and planned to kill him, but instead cast him into a pit. Through all of this, Joseph remained faithful. We do not read of him retaliating or getting even. He chose to trust God.

9. **GENESIS 37:20** *Come now therefore, and let us slay him, and cast him into some pit, and we will say, Some evil beast hath devoured him: and we shall see what will become of his dreams.*

10. Each of us will experience seasons of opposition in our lives, but we must remember that God is always in control. We can learn from Joseph's brothers that God plans even our enemies! Your enemies may envy you and persecute you through gossip or slander, yet they are serving God's purpose in your life! God can use the trying circumstances in ways you wouldn't even imagine.

11. **B. When he was sold by his brethren**

12. **GENESIS 37:27-28** *Come, and let us sell him to the Ishmeelites, and let not our hand be upon him; for he is our brother and our flesh. And his brethren were content. Then there passed by Midianites merchantmen; and they drew and lifted up Joseph out of the pit, and sold Joseph to the Ishmeelites for twenty pieces of silver: and they brought Joseph into Egypt.*

13. Jealousy and envy developed in the hearts of Joseph's brothers who betrayed him and sold him into slavery, telling Jacob, their father, that Joseph was dead. (Do you ever feel your family or friends don't appreciate you? Remember Joseph!)

14.II TIMOTHY 3:12 *Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.*

15.**It is required of a man that he be faithful, not successful.**

16.Looking back at the story of Joseph, being sold into slavery seemed to be the opposite of success and the opposite of God's plan for him. What looked like an unchangeable tragedy was another step in God's journey. Joseph's faith never wavered. He knew God was in control. God was the planner; Joseph was only the instrument in God's hands.

17.C. When he was blessed in Egypt

18.GENESIS 39:2 *And the LORD was with Joseph, and he was a prosperous man; and he was in the house of his master the Egyptian.*

19.Joseph continued to remain faithful through manifold suffering. He was betrayed by his brothers, sold into slavery, accused wrongly, and imprisoned unjustly. Nevertheless, through each circumstance, Joseph's faith was strengthened, and God blessed him on his journey.

20.1 Peter 5:10 - *"But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you"*

21.God formed Joseph's life and found him faithful through trials and testing. Perhaps the greatest test Joseph would face was being exalted. Notice Pharaoh's accolades of Joseph:

22.GENESIS 41:39-40 *And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, Forasmuch as God hath shewed thee all this, there is none so discreet and wise as thou art: Thou shalt be over my house, and according unto thy word shall all my people be ruled: only in the throne will I be greater than thou.*

23.To some, being made a ruler in Egypt would be a dream come true. In reality, Joseph was called to occupy a position that was difficult and heavily laden with responsibility.

24.Being second only to the ruler of Egypt brought a new temptation. While some may boast and take credit for their achievements, Joseph did not. He realized God had raised him up.

25.*"But God is the judge: he putteth down one, and setteth up another" (Psalm 75:7).*

26.To remain faithful and dependent on God was a great challenge. Joseph remained steadfast in his faith. He never forgot who blessed him; therefore, God blessed everything that he did.

27.Lee Iacocca, the legendary carmaker, wrote in his autobiography: "Here I am in the twilight years of my life, still wondering what it's all about. I can tell you this: fame and fortune is for the birds."

28.D. When he was unjustly accused

29.GENESIS 39:7-9 *And it came to pass after these things, that his master's wife cast her eyes upon Joseph; and she said, Lie with me. But he refused, and said unto his master's wife, Behold, my master wotteth not what is with me in the house, and he hath committed all that he hath to my hand; There is none greater in this house than I; neither hath he kept back any thing from me but thee, because thou art his wife: how then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?*

30.1. Potiphar's wife attempted to seduce Joseph.

31.Again, in a response indicative of his faithfulness to God, he refused the temptation. Joseph was willing to lose a coveted position in the world in order to maintain his integrity.

32.Today, as in Joseph's day, a person who wants to serve God must guard against choosing wrong when tempted. Satan will try any method to derail you from God's purpose for your life. Maintain your integrity.